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Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry files murder charge in 25 year-old cold case

Paul Reese, Sr. is formally charged with the murder of Dawn Stuard

(Indianapolis, Ind.) Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry announced today that Paul Reese, Sr. has been charged with murder in the death of Dawn Stuard in 1986, thus bringing charges in a 25 year-old cold case.

Dawn Stuard was 13 years old when she disappeared from her eastside neighborhood on March 16, 1986. Her body was found the following day in a wooded area near Pogue's Run.

"Over the years, Paul Reese, Sr. was a suspect in the death of Dawn Stuard, but dedicated policework and recent DNA evidence are what ultimately led to the charge filed today," said Prosecutor Curry. "We look forward to prosecuting this case to its conclusion."

A laboratory examination report from the Indianapolis Marion County Forensic Services Agency confirmed last week that Dawn Stuard's DNA profile matched blood found in the basement of the Reese residence on N. Bosart Ave.

Prosecutor Curry also commended Sgt. Steve West, who investigated this case as his first homicide in 1986. Sgt. West retired from the Indianapolis Police Department in Dec. 2007 and has worked for the Marion County Prosecutor's Major Case Division since March 2008.

"Sgt. West took this case and never let it go," said Prosecutor Curry. "Filing the murder charge today is the result of his dedicated commitment to justice, a commitment shared by law enforcement officers in this county to solving cold cases."

Paul Reese, Sr. was convicted last year of burglary in a case arising from the murder of Clifford Haddix, Sr. He was sentenced in Dec. 2010, and is currently

serving 20 years at the Correctional Industrial Facility in Pendleton, Indiana. Reese's son, Brian Reese, was convicted of murder for the death of Mr. Haddix, as well as being convicted of attempt murder in the shooting of Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Officer Jason Fishburn.